Children's Services

BUSINESS PLAN 2005-08

ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

The business plan for the three years commencing April 1, 2005 was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Government Accountability Act* and the government's accounting policies. All of the government's policy decisions as of March 21, 2005 with material economic or fiscal implications of which I am aware have been considered in preparing the business plan.

The Ministry's priorities outlined in the business plan were developed in the context of the government's business and fiscal plans. I am committed to achieving the planned results laid out in this business plan.

[Original Signed]

Heather Forsyth, *Minister of Children's Services*
March 24, 2005

THE MINISTRY

The Ministry Business Plan for 2005-08 comprises the following organizations:

- *Child and Family Services Authorities* – help determine Ministry-wide priorities and directions, deliver Ministry programs and services, and meet the local priorities and needs of children, families, and communities.
- *Youth Secretariat* – advises the Minister on key issues facing youth and ways to address those issues.
- *Child and Youth Advocate* – represents the rights, interests and viewpoints of children and youth receiving child intervention or family enhancement services or who are being helped under the protection of *Children Involved in Prostitution Act*.
- *Social Care Facilities Review Committee* – a citizen panel with a legislated mandate to monitor provincially funded social care facilities, and investigate complaints to ensure the best possible care.

- *Delegated First Nations Agencies* – delivery of provincial child intervention programs and services to families of member First Nations, through formal delegation agreements established with the Ministry.
- *Department of Children's Services* – provides leadership to: (a) establish policies that promote the well-being of children, youth and families, (b) support the delivery of quality services focused on improving outcomes for children, youth and families, (c) promote greater capacity for community services that support children in reaching their potential, and (d) design business strategies that help the Ministry achieve its vision.
- *Appeals Secretariat* – A citizen appeal panel established in legislation to hear appeals of decisions under the *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act* and the *Family Supports for Children with Disabilities Act*.

The business plan also recognizes the critical role of our partners in delivery of provincial programs and services. At the local municipal level, the Ministry invests in Family and Community Support Services to strengthen the capacity and self-reliance of communities to plan and deliver services to meet the needs of children, youth and families. The Ministry's entities also enter into a range of contracts and agreements with agencies, Delegated First Nations Agencies and Aboriginal organizations to provide services at the community level. Other Government of Alberta Ministries, as well as municipal/provincial/territorial/federal governments are strategic partners.

VISION

Strong children, youth, families and communities

MISSION

Working together to enhance the ability of families and communities to develop nurturing and safe environments for children, youth and families.

CORE BUSINESSES

Core Business 1: **Promoting the development and well-being of children, youth and families**

Goal 1 Children and youth will have a healthy start in life and the supports they need to reach their potential

Core Business 2: **Keeping children, youth and families safe and protected**

Goal 2 Families will be safe, healthy and able to promote children's development

Goal 3 Children in need will be protected and supported by permanent, nurturing relationships

Core Business 3: **Promoting healthy communities for children, youth and families**

Goal 4 The well-being and self-reliance of Aboriginal children, youth, families and communities will be promoted, supported and comparable to that of other Albertans

Goal 5 Communities will have the capacity for shared planning and delivery of services that promote the well-being of children, youth and families

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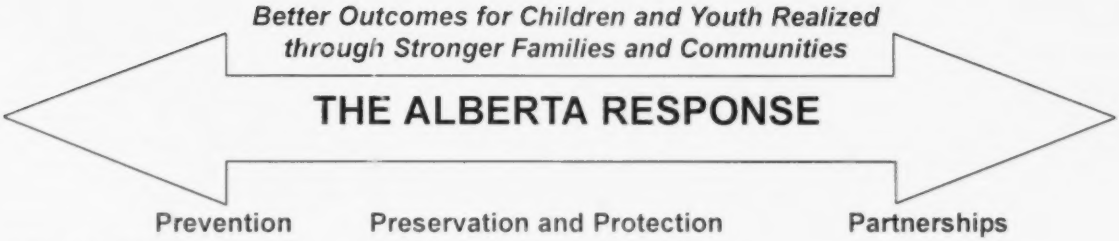
Better Outcomes for Children and Youth Realized through Stronger Families and Communities
THE ALBERTA RESPONSE
Prevention
Preservation and Protection
Partnerships

CORE BUSINESSES:

- Promoting the development and well-being of children, youth and families.
- Keeping children, youth and families safe and protected.
- Promoting healthy communities for children, youth and families.

KEY PROGRAM AREAS:

Preventative supports for all children, youth and families

- Prevention of Family Violence and Bullying
- Parenting Resources
- Early Intervention
- Child Care
- Youth In Transition
- Family Support for Children with Disabilities
- Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
- Family and Community Support Services

Preserving families at risk
Protecting children and youth in need

- Protecting Children and Youth from Sexual Exploitation
- Child Intervention Services
- Family Enhancement
- Supports for Victims of Family Violence
- Advocacy on behalf of Children and Youth

Building resources for community-based service delivery

- Community Capacity Building
- Child and Family Research Support
- Alberta's Promise
- Alberta Children and Youth Initiative
- Aboriginal Policy Initiative
- Health Innovation and Wellness Initiative
- Leading in Learning and Skilled Workforce Initiative
- Economic Development and Innovation Initiative

LINK TO THE GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN

Investments in children, youth and families are the foundation to realizing Alberta's vision – *a vibrant and prosperous province where Albertans enjoy a superior quality of life and are confident about the future for themselves and their children.* Services to Alberta's children are not only an important service to those in need; they are an investment in the human potential of the province. Children's Service's core businesses and goals are aligned with and support a number of government goals and priorities and play a key role in Goal 4, *Alberta's children and youth will be supported in reaching their potential*. Children's Services is a champion of the Alberta Children and Youth Initiative; a co-champion of the Aboriginal Policy Initiative and the Leading in Learning and Skilled Workforce Initiative; a partnering Ministry of the Health Innovation and Wellness Initiative; and a contributor to the Economic Development and Innovation Initiative. Children's Services is also leading the Strategy for Prevention of Family Violence and Bullying medium-term strategy and participating on other medium-term strategies, including the Rural Development Strategy. The Ministry is committed to achieving the Government of Alberta Strategic Business Plan by supporting Opportunity 4 – Making Alberta the Best Place to Live, Work and Visit, as well as Opportunity 2 – Leading in Learning. The Ministry works to achieve its vision through joint initiatives with community partners and through its participation in cross-ministry initiatives. Children's Services strategic directions supporting the government's business plan are: **prevention** – a healthy start and supports for children to learn, grow and succeed; **preservation** – a safe nurturing family environment for children; **protection** – a safety net to protect vulnerable children in need; **partnerships** – a community to help families raise their children.

SIGNIFICANT OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The following opportunities and challenges are key drivers that could impact the Ministry's ability to achieve its goals. Children's Services considers these drivers when developing initiatives and strategies to support the development of strong children, youth and families.

Demographics

- Alberta has the youngest population in Canada
- Increases in provincial population
- Because of the strong economy, families are moving to Alberta
- Most families are living in or are moving to urban areas
- While Alberta's population is growing, the population growth rate is slowing

Aboriginal Albertans

- High population growth. The birth rate for the Aboriginal population is 1.5 times the birth rate for non-Aboriginal population, and the Aboriginal population is much younger than the general population
- High representation in the Ministry's child intervention case load
- Aboriginal children at risk are more likely to be placed in "out of home" care than non-Aboriginal children
- Opportunities to partner with First Nations, Metis Settlements and organizations to provide child intervention services

Children with Disabilities

- New and more effective treatments available for children with disabilities
- Treatments or therapies can become very costly, posing a challenge to predicting resources needed
- Better understanding and diagnosis of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
- Increased demand for resources as a result of more children being diagnosed with disabilities, partly due to advances in the ability to diagnose and increased public awareness
- More research is needed to determine the long-term outcomes of different intervention strategies for children and youth with disabilities and to improve the matching of intervention strategies to the child, youth and family strengths, needs and aspirations

Community Issues

- Family violence trends and incidence rates result in more demand for spaces in women's shelters
- Increased community capacity to respond to the needs of victims of family violence and bullying
- Opportunity to respond to issues identified in recent public consultations on family violence
- Family structures are changing
- Alberta divorce rate is one of highest in Canada, resulting in increasing numbers of lone parent families
- Urban versus rural challenges, including access to services

Partnerships

- Partnering with other levels of government and agencies to meet the needs of children, youth and families
- Partnering with Aboriginal organizations to provide culturally-appropriate programs and services with the Aboriginal community

Changing Legislation

- Implementing two new pieces of legislation – *Family Support for Children with Disabilities Act* and the *Family, Child and Youth Enhancement Act*
- Many resources going into implementing these new Acts, which may limit the Ministry's and partnering agency's ability to take on new initiatives. There is a need to allow time for stabilization
- The *Social Care Facilities Licensing Act* is under review. The review is in the preliminary stages (research) and is intended to culminate in new legislation in Spring 2006
- A new Child Care Regulation, under the *Social Care Facilities Licensing Act*, was introduced on August 1, 2004 that replaces the former Day Care Regulation

Child Intervention Services

- While there is a downward trend in the number of child intervention services cases, there is an increase in the proportion (and number) of children who require the highest and most resource-intensive level of intervention and treatment

Youth at Risk

- Build capacity to provide supports to youth at risk of sexual exploitation
- Reduce barriers to successful transitioning to independence and adulthood
- Pursue development of strategies with other Ministries to reduce potential for youth to be at risk (e.g., drugs) and need for government intervention

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2005-08

Through the Ministry's review of external and internal challenges, the strategic priorities described below have been identified. These are in addition to the important ongoing core activities of the Ministry.

1. Prevention of Family Violence and Bullying **Linkage:** **Goals 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5**	Children's Services will implement the Government approved recommendations from the Strategy for the Prevention of Family Violence and Bullying Action Plan. A new provincial response to family violence and bullying will be developed with strengthened community-based, comprehensive services and supports for children and other family members who witness or are victims of family violence. This will be achieved through sustained and secure funding which will cover both prevention and protection. Prevention of family violence and bullying is everybody's business. Alberta will be hosting the 2005 World Conference on Family Violence.
2. Parenting Resources **Linkage:** **Goals 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5**	Children's Services will work towards all children having a healthy start and being ready to learn. The Parent Link centre framework will be implemented on a phased-in basis, building on what already exists. An accreditation system for Alberta childcare centres, family day home agencies, and Parent Link centres will focus on assurances that appropriate child development environments will be implemented.
3. Family Support for Children with Disabilities **Linkage:** **Goals 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5**	Children's Services will continue to operationalize the new *Family Support for Children with Disabilities Act* to provide appropriate resources to help families meet the needs of and promote the abilities of children and youth with disabilities, helping them to achieve their potential.
4. Redefined directions in child and youth intervention and development **Linkage:** **Goals 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5**	Children's Services will ensure that all children in need reside in permanent nurturing homes, with the new *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act* operationalized over the 2004-06 timeframe. Also, more targeted case management strategies for the regional delivery system will be developed and implemented in order to produce better outcomes for children. Children's Services will work with partners to pursue the legal interests and representation for children involved in contentious access and custody challenges, for children who are harmed while in care, and for children in instances where legal representation is appointed by the court in child intervention matters.

5. Partnerships

Linkage: Goals 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

Children's Services will develop strategic partnerships with provincial and regional agencies to promote strong children, youth, families and communities; and champion the best interests of children, youth and families through cross-ministry initiatives, particularly the Alberta Children and Youth Initiative, Aboriginal Policy Initiative, Health Innovation and Wellness Initiative and the Leading in Learning and Skilled Workforce Initiative.

Within the Economic Development and Innovation Initiative, Children's Services will act on Rural Development Strategy recommendations supporting rural communities and their children, youth and families in areas such as child care and youth in transition and will build community capacity for shared planning and delivery of services contributing to a continuum of child, youth and family needs through community engagement.

Children's Services will develop and advance strategies to position federal initiatives to meet the needs of children within an Alberta context, supports for early learning and child care, and will partner with other governments on intergovernmental initiatives including the unique Alberta – British Columbia Memorandum of Understanding.

Children's Services will, in collaboration with other ministries, work to develop and advance strategies concerning the recognition, detection and prevention of sexual exploitation of children and youth within Alberta and other jurisdictions.

CORE BUSINESSES, GOALS, STRATEGIES & PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Core Business One: Promoting the development and well-being of children, youth and families

GOAL ONE

Children and youth will have a healthy start in life and the supports they need to reach their potential

What it means The Ministry supports parents in giving children a healthy start in life and providing them with the foundations to learn, grow and succeed. While parents have the primary responsibility for raising their children, governments, communities, organizations, schools and businesses all have supporting roles to play in meeting the needs of children and youth. In doing so, the Ministry together with partners recognize the importance that must be placed on the first six years of a child's experience because this sets the tone for life-long development, and how children will learn and cope as adults. **Expected outcomes:** Children and youth are physically, emotionally, socially, intellectually and spiritually healthy. Children and youth meet individual developmental milestones.

Strategies

1.1 Lead the implementation of the Strategy for the Prevention of Family Violence and Bullying cross-ministry action plan including the development of enabling legislation, funding and organizational structure.

1.2 Develop cross-ministry, culturally-sensitive, community-based parent resources that assist parents with acquiring information and skills to give children the best possible start in life, and the supports to learn, grow and succeed.

1.3 Strengthen and integrate early childhood development services, child development screening, parent education and family supports through the Parent Link centre initiative.

1.4 Continue cross-ministry implementation of the Policy Framework for Children and Youth with Special and Complex Needs, in collaboration with other initiatives including improving coordination and access to services and supports for youth with disabilities. Enhancing cross-sector system capacity to respond to the needs of children and youth with special and complex needs, (e.g., Family Support for Children with Disabilities legislation).

1.5 Implement child care standards and investigate options that strengthen the ability of families in all communities to care for their children, support children in meeting developmental milestones, and balance home and work responsibilities.

1.6 Continue cross-ministry work to support youth in transition in order to better address the needs of youth and help them as they transition to adulthood, including obtaining further learning, employment and mentors where needed.

1.7 Promote and improve access to the Ministry's bursary program to help increase the educational attainment of children and youth in care, to support vocational and educational pursuits and contribute to the supports they need for a successful transition to adulthood.

1.8 Work through the cross-ministry committee and community partners to improve the services aimed at preventing Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder by reducing substance abuse through increased awareness targeted at high-risk mothers, and to address the needs of children, youth and families affected.

1.9 Work with municipalities to strengthen community-based services for children, youth and families through the Family and Community Support Services program.

1.10 Develop flexible childcare options for families in rural communities to better meet parent's childcare needs.

1.11 Promote the development and provide support to Youth Networks, which participate in community engagement and in the design, delivery and assessment services for children, youth and their families.

1.12 Develop strategies and services to support youth and children receiving protective services to reach the same educational milestones as children and youth who are not in need of protective services.

1.13 Continue to implement the new *Family Support for Children with Disabilities Act* and policies to focus resources for children with disabilities on early intervention and family supports, and better co-ordinate services among partners so that families obtain the supports they need for their children and youth.

1.14 Develop strategies to ensure that families of children with disabilities are provided information about supports and services available to them and their children.

1.15 Support child care programs in working towards and achieving accreditation standards of high quality.

1.16 Increase the level of data available from local programs (Canadian Outcomes and Research Institute) through Family and Community Support Services, in order to set benchmarks and establish a performance measure for subsequent Ministry business plans.

Performance Measures	Last Actual (year)	Target 2005-06	Target 2006-07	Target 2007-08
1.a Percentage of expenditures in the children/youth project and service category of Family and Community Support Services	29% (2003-04)	29%	29%	29%
1.b Percentage of licensed day care centers and contracted family day home agencies that are accredited	n/a*	20%	40%	50%

Notes:

1.a Alberta's children and youth, aged 0-19, account for 28% (840,000), of Alberta's population. The Ministry and local governments jointly fund preventive social services for Albertans through Family and Community Support Services. This measure provides an indicator of the commitment to promote the well being of children, youth and families through Family and Community Support Services.
Source: Annual Family and Community Support Services Program Reports

1.b Accreditation standards of excellence promote each child's early growth and development, improving outcomes for children, families, staff and community. Accreditation is voluntary.
* Accreditation was not fully implemented in 2003-04.
Source: Child Care Information System (CCIS)

Core Business Two: Keeping children, youth and families safe and protected

GOAL TWO

Families will be safe, healthy and able to promote children's development

What it means

Healthy families are the best and most secure means for raising children. Therefore, the Ministry works with all its partners to promote community-based resources that help preserve and support families in overcoming at-risk circumstances to ensure that children reside in permanent, nurturing homes. **Expected Outcomes**: Children, youth and families overcome at-risk circumstances. Children, youth and families are safe, healthy, resilient and self-reliant.

Strategies

2.1 Implement a coordinated Provincial Response to Family Violence and Bullying with strengthened culturally-sensitive, community-based services, resources and supports for children and other family members who witness or are victims of family violence and bullying. Improve the availability and access to women's shelters.

2.2 Work with other ministries and community partners to develop a seamless continuum of supports to help preserve families and their ability to nurture their children's well-being and development.

2.3 Building on the work of the Alberta Response Model, continue implementing, assessing and refining strategies and responses to improve community-based early intervention capacity to assist families overcome at-risk circumstances and care for their own children.

2.4 Develop Ministry guidelines and cross-ministry resources in collaboration with other ministries and government agencies to improve the supports provided for children, youth and families who are experiencing serious substance abuse.

Performance Measures	Last Actual (year)	Target 2005-06	Target 2006-07	Target 2007-08
2.a Percentage of adults staying at government-funded women's emergency shelters who report that they are better able to keep themselves and the children under their care safer from abuse.	95% (2003-04)	95%	95%	95%
2.b Percentage of families accessing Ministry programs that indicate positive impacts for their children. Ministry programs surveyed are:				
Family Support for Children with Disabilities	88.3%	n/a*	5%over last actual for each program	n/a*
Foster Care	79.0%			
Adoption	86.1%			
Childcare Subsidy	94.0% (2002-03)			

Notes:

2.a Women's emergency shelter services are crucial elements in the prevention of family violence. This measure is about effectiveness of government-funded women's emergency shelter services to support women having taken short-term (21-day) refuge from family violence in their efforts to reduce future risks of abuse.
Source: Women's Emergency Shelter Outcomes Exit Survey

2.b One key outcome indicator for how programs and services are performing involves feedback from the users of those programs and services that contribute to the healthy development of children and youth. This measure involves client surveys of key Ministry programs where clients can provide feedback on their satisfaction with services received and their perception of the program's impact on their family.
*Surveys done every two years.
Source: Multiple client surveys

GOAL THREE

Children in need will be protected and supported by permanent, nurturing relationships

What it means

Every child deserves a home where they are safe and nurtured. The Ministry intervenes to protect children from abuse and neglect, and ensure that children are reunited with their families as soon as possible whenever appropriate, or are placed in other nurturing, permanent homes. **Expected Outcomes**: Children and youth in need are protected from further abuse and neglect. Children and youth in care are placed in secure and stable environments that allow for the development of life-long relationships and connection to family, culture and community.

Strategies

3.1 Continue to implement the new *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act* to improve the safety and well-being of children, involve families and children in decision-making, assure quality services to promote children's development, shorten the time children spend in government care, and unite children with their families or other permanent, nurturing homes.

3.2 Complete the recommendations of the Foster Care Review by focusing on the training needs for the children needing permanency. The training focus will be on the foster parents, kinship care providers, adoptive parents and those wishing to seek private guardianship. The new training will be consistently provided throughout the province by our Child and Family Services Authorities, Delegated First Nations Agencies and contracted agencies.

3.3 Increase the number of permanent placements for children coming into care through permanency planning and for those under Permanent Guardianship or Agreement through Supports for Permanency.

3.4 Continue to explore permanency planning options for Aboriginal families and youth.

3.5 Continue to develop and implement a quality assurance system to improve the quality, consistency, and accountability of child intervention services across the province and outcomes for children and families.

3.6 Continue to develop and maintain quality assurance mechanisms including the Children's Services Appeal Secretariat and the Social Care Facilities Review Committee.

3.7 Work with partners to develop processes to provide children with legal representation in contentious access and custody challenges, for children who are harmed while in care, and for children in instances where legal representation is appointed by the court in child intervention matters.

3.8 Re-focus preventive and treatment services for the protection of children and youth at risk of or involved in prostitution or other forms of sexual exploitation.

3.9 Undertake a review of the *Social Care Facilities Licensing Act* to promote quality of care in social care facilities.

3.10 Ensure that intentional and formal transition planning occurs for all youth in care to support their needs and ensure these plans are regularly reviewed.

3.11 Improve access to mentoring programs to help increase the educational attainment of children and youth in care, and ensure that service plans are in place to support the needs for a successful transition of youth to adulthood.

3.12 Further develop the role of the Child and Youth Advocate to ensure that children in the system are heard and their rights protected.

Performance Measures	Last Actual (year)	Target 2005-06	Target 2006-07	Target 2007-08
3.a Percentage of children who suffer injury that results in hospitalization or death while receiving protective services.	0.2%* (2003-04)	0	0	0
3.b Percentage of children who experience at least one incident of child maltreatment within twelve months of a previously confirmed incident of child maltreatment.	19%* (2003-04)	10% less than 2004-05 actual	10% less than 2005-06 actual	10% less than 2006-07 actual

Notes:

3.a Protection from serious harm is a key priority for all protective services. This measure provides an indication of Children's Services' performance in keeping children in protective services safe from harm. Consideration is being given to revising or augmenting this measure in the 2006-09 Business Plan in order for the Ministry to report results reflective of Intervention Services resulting from new legislation.
* Based on 11 months of CWIS data, May 1, 2003 to March 31, 2004
Source: Child, Youth Information Module

3.b The ultimate goal of child intervention services is to prevent future maltreatment of children who receive these services. This measure is designed to assess the performance of the Ministry in its effort to reduce the recurrence of maltreatment.
* Baseline reestablished in 2004-05 due to changes in performance measure methodology.
Source: Child, Youth Information Module

The following measures have been committed to by the Ministry, but are not yet fully developed for reporting.

3.c Number of children in the permanent care of the Director who are adopted.

3.d Number of children, in the permanent care of the Director, for whom Private Guardianship Orders are granted.

Core Business Three: Promoting healthy communities for children, youth and families

GOAL FOUR — The well-being and self-reliance of Aboriginal children, youth, families and communities will be promoted, supported and comparable to that of other Albertans

What it means

First Nations, Metis and other Aboriginal peoples have the desire, ability and commitment to improve outcomes for and the success of Alberta's children, families and communities. The Ministry works with First Nations, Metis and other Aboriginal peoples to build on the strengths of Aboriginal communities in developing the governance, accountability and service delivery capacity to promote the care of their children, youth, and families. **Expected Outcomes:** Aboriginal communities have the capacity to meet the needs of children, youth and families. There are a reduced number of Aboriginal children represented in the child intervention caseload. Aboriginal children, youth and families receive culturally-appropriate services.

Strategies

4.1 Continue to implement the Ministry's Aboriginal Policy Initiative strategies to address gaps and improve the quality of services designed to meet the needs of Aboriginal children, youth and families.

4.2 Strengthen the involvement of First Nations communities in planning for their children through First Nations Designates.

4.3 In collaboration with all the partners, review provincial policies and programs to ensure that they are working towards meeting the needs of First Nations, Metis and other Aboriginal communities.

4.4 Develop a province-wide suicide prevention awareness and education campaign targeting Aboriginal youth and implement strategies within Aboriginal communities to prevent and reduce the incidence of youth suicide.

4.5 Promote and improve access to the Ministry's bursary and mentoring programs to help increase the educational attainment of Aboriginal children and youth in care, to support vocational and educational pursuits and contribute to the supports they need for a successful transition to adulthood.

4.6 In collaboration with First Nations representatives, continue to strengthen the accountability framework for *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act* agreements that support First Nations communities in the governance, delivery and evaluation of child intervention and permanency planning services for Aboriginal children and youth.

4.7 Promote joint planning and action between the Ministry, the Metis Nation of Alberta Association and Metis Settlements General Council respecting equitable participation and involvement of Metis peoples in the programs, policies and standards that affect Metis children.

Performance Measures	Last Actual (year)	Target 2005-06	Target 2006-07	Target 2007-08
4.a Percentage of Aboriginal children who suffer injury that results in hospitalization or death while receiving protective services	0.2%* (2003-04)	0	0	0
4.b Percentage of Aboriginal children in foster care who are placed with Aboriginal families	Baseline Established (2004-05)	= or higher than baseline	= or higher than baseline	= or higher than baseline

Notes:

4.a Protection from serious harm is a key priority for all protective services. This measure provides an indication of Alberta Children's Services' performance in keeping Aboriginal children safe from harm. Consideration is being given to revising or augementing this measure in the 2006-09 Business Plan in order for the Ministry to report results reflective of Intervention Services resulting from new legislation.

* Based on 11 months of CWIS data from May 1, 2003 to March 31, 2004

Source: Child, Youth Information Module

4.b When children and youth must be removed from their homes, efforts should be made to place them in families that are geographically, culturally appropriate and socially familiar and nurturing to the child. Focusing on Aboriginal children in foster care, this measure is an effort to show how the Ministry is performing in its efforts to achieve ethno-cultural placement matching thereby contributing to reconnecting Aboriginal children to their cultural roots and environment.

Source: Child, Youth Information Module

GOAL FIVE

Communities will have the capacity for shared planning and delivery of services that promote the well-being of children, youth and families

What it means

Children must have safe places to learn, grow and thrive outside the home, and a strong connection to family and community. The Ministry works in partnership with Albertans to develop resources that make communities safe, healthy and self-reliant, and that build on the unique capacity of communities to deliver the right services for children, youth and families, in the right place, and at the right time.

Expected Outcomes: Alberta is recognized at the international, national and community levels for leadership in promoting strong children, families and communities. Communities are responsive to the needs, values and cultures of children and their families. Children, youth and families participate in decisions that affect them. Albertans are involved in addressing issues faced by children, youth and families.

Strategies

5.1 Champion the best interests of children and youth through cross-ministry initiatives, including the Alberta Children and Youth Initiative, Aboriginal Policy Initiative, Leading in Learning and Skilled Workforce Initiative and Health Innovation and Wellness Initiative.

5.2 Promote the capacity and accountability of Child and Family Services Authorities, Family and Community Support Services, and Aboriginal communities to design, integrate, deliver and assess services for children, youth and families, including support through the Community Partnership Enhancement initiative.

5.3 Develop and enhance the capacity of Child and Family Services Boards to effectively govern the regional authorities.

5.4 Work with partners to provide opportunities for adults to connect with vulnerable children and youth who would benefit from having the support of an adult.

5.5 Collaborate with the Alberta Centre for Child, Family and Community Research, community, ministry and university partners to promote policy-relevant research and best practices to improve outcomes for children, youth, families, and communities.

5.6 Facilitate opportunities for citizens to participate in public forums and discussions to advance the well-being of children, youth and families, including the Children's Forum and Youth Advisory Panel.

5.7 Provide leadership on international, national, and inter-provincial initiatives to promote the safety, well-being and development of children, youth and families including the 2005 World Conference on Family Violence.

5.8 Continue to celebrate and promote the success of Alberta's children and youth through an ongoing provincial recognition program.

5.9 Support the continuing operations of Alberta's Promise, a public-private partnership dedicated to finding new and better ways of working together to give children the opportunity to lead happy, healthy and successful lives.

5.10 Support community stakeholders to develop and enhance collaborative coordinated responses to family violence through the Community Incentive Fund.

Performance Measures	Last Actual (year)	Target 2005-06	Target 2006-07	Target 2007-08
5.a Percentage of community stakeholders reporting an increase in the community's ability to meet the needs of children, youth and families	62.5% (2002-03)	n/a*	70%	n/a*
5.b Percentage of children and youth who received family enhancement services and afterwards did not require protective services	89.7% (2003-04)	New Baseline established**	Percentage increase	Percentage increase

Notes:

5.a Involvement of community stakeholders at the local level improves the delivery of services to children and better enables response to specific community needs. This measure involves a survey conducted with a comprehensive listing of community stakeholders provided by the Child and Family Services Authorities.
*Survey done every two years
Source: Community Partners Survey

5.b This measure is about the effectiveness of the family enhancement services – a child intervention delivery approach that engages families with community-based services to resolve issues before they escalate to a level that requires protective services. With the implementation of the new *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act*, the nature of delivering enhancement services is changing.
** A new baseline will need to be established in 2005-06.
Source: Child, Youth Information Module

Ministry-Wide Corporate Objectives

The Ministry-wide corporate objectives support goal achievement across all three core businesses. Service Quality and Community Strategies focus on policy and program development to support community-based program delivery and contribute to children and youth in reaching their potential. Strategy and Support Services provides support service to all areas of the Ministry in the matters of: planning, reporting, measurement, human resource and financial management, information management and technology and legal services. Children's Services corporate objectives are:

I. Strengthen business planning and results reporting, to support decision-making and accountability, with an increased emphasis on longer-term strategic planning and implementation of a comprehensive performance measurement framework.

II. Develop and co-ordinate Ministry human resource strategic planning to ensure that the organizational capacity, competencies and morale are in place to meet service delivery requirements as well as contribute to cross-ministry/collaborative initiatives along with the tools/support/resources to enhance organizational effectiveness.

III. Work with the Alberta Corporate Service Centre and operating units of the Ministry to implement service standards and address service issues; improve communications throughout the Ministry regarding Alberta Corporate Service Centre services; and implementing service improvements in the Ministry.

IV. Develop and implement leading edge strategic financial and accounting policies and practices, re-engineer budget planning, forecasting and reporting, and implement internal controls that enhance accountability, decision-making and use of financial resources.

V. Develop and implement information technology strategies that support greater integration, and use of technology in day-to-day business processes and information needs in delivery of services.

VI. Develop strategies and capacity to support the Ministry's requirement for legal services, to identify legal risks and respond to legal issues and legislative needs.

VII. Improve communications with partners and clients in the design, delivery and regular evaluation of policies, programs and services for children, youth and families to improve outcomes for children and youth.

EXPENSE BY CORE BUSINESS

(thousands of dollars)

	Comparable 2003-04 Actual	Comparable 2004-05 Budget	Comparable 2004-05 Forecast	2005-06 Estimates	2006-07 Target	2007-08 Target
Promoting the development and well-being of children, youth and families	263,443	303,675	311,270	334,142	352,955	371,446
Keeping children, youth and families safe and protected	419,800	421,960	439,725	447,552	456,934	463,005
Promoting healthy communities for children, youth and families	17,135	15,808	15,658	16,919	16,928	16,879
MINISTRY EXPENSE	700,378	741,443	766,653	798,613	826,817	851,330

MINISTRY STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

(thousands of dollars)

	Comparable 2003-04 Actual	Comparable 2004-05 Budget	Comparable 2004-05 Forecast	2005-06 Estimates	2006-07 Target	2007-08 Target
REVENUE						
Internal Governmental Transfers	30,000	30,000	30,000	34,000	34,500	36,500
Transfers from Government of Canada	192,997	217,128	207,953	222,336	229,413	234,810
Other Revenue	11,040	11,550	11,550	8,959	8,922	8,992
MINISTRY REVENUE	234,037	258,678	249,503	265,295	272,835	280,302
EXPENSE						
Program						
Promoting the development and well-being of children, youth and families:						
Child Care	58,448	68,557	63,900	69,517	70,490	71,477
Family Support for Children with Disabilities	67,087	77,517	77,517	82,769	93,796	103,176
Family and Community Support Services	60,184	63,470	63,470	65,228	67,035	68,891
Early Intervention	30,138	37,410	37,410	37,934	38,465	39,004
Prevention of Family Violence and Bullying	16,984	19,372	24,692	28,844	29,947	33,054
Parenting Resources Initiative	6,350	8,330	15,830	14,723	17,075	19,732
Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Initiatives	4,488	5,335	5,335	5,410	5,486	5,563
Youth in Transition	855	1,250	1,250	4,463	3,804	3,273
Keeping children, youth and families safe and protected:						
Child Intervention Services	383,365	381,389	399,435	401,789	408,289	414,989
Protecting Children from Sexual Exploitation	4,155	5,600	5,600	6,584	6,169	6,255
Child and Youth Advocate	2,149	3,800	3,800	5,353	7,707	7,762
Promoting healthy communities for children, youth and families:						
Community Initiatives	12,427	12,665	12,665	12,665	12,665	12,665
Child and Family Research	2,800	1,000	1,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Alberta's Promise	678	975	893	975	975	975
Support Services:						
Ministry Support	9,481	10,955	11,380	13,085	13,185	13,285
Program Support	38,936	41,780	39,776	44,574	47,029	46,529
Amortization of Capital Assets	1,336	538	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200
Valuation Adjustments and Other Provisions	517	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500
MINISTRY EXPENSE	700,378	741,443	766,653	798,613	826,817	851,330
Gain (Loss) on Disposal of Capital Assets	-	-	-	-	-	-
NET OPERATING RESULT	(466,341)	(482,765)	(517,150)	(533,318)	(553,982)	(571,028)

CONSOLIDATED NET OPERATING RESULT

(thousands of dollars)

	Comparable 2003-04 Actual	Comparable 2004-05 Budget	Comparable 2004-05 Forecast	2005-06 Estimates	2006-07 Target	2007-08 Target
Ministry Revenue	234,037	258,678	249,503	265,295	272,835	280,302
Inter-ministry consolidation adjustments	(30,708)	(30,000)	(30,000)	(34,000)	(34,500)	(36,500)
Consolidated Revenue	203,329	228,678	219,503	231,295	238,335	243,802
Ministry Program Expense	700,378	741,443	766,653	798,613	826,817	851,330
Inter-ministry consolidation adjustments	(708)	-	-	-	-	-
Consolidated Program Expense	**699,670**	**741,443**	**766,653**	**798,613**	**826,817**	**851,330**
Gain (Loss) on Disposal of Capital Assets	-	-	-	-	-	-
CONSOLIDATED NET OPERATING RESULT	(496,341)	(512,765)	(547,150)	(567,318)	(588,482)	(607,528)